

REMARKS

Claims 2-5, 7-10, 12, 15-18, 20-23, 25, and 28-36 are pending in the present application. Claims 1, 11, 13, 14, 24, 26, and 27 are canceled; claims 2-5, 7-9, 12, 15-18, 20-23, 25, and 28 are amended; and claims 29-36 are added. Reconsideration of the claims is respectfully requested.

The examiner rejected claims 4 and 7 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter, which applicants regard as the invention. Applicants have amended claims 4 and 17 to correct the antecedent basis problem by having claim 4 depend from claim 3 and claim 17 depend from claim 16, thus obviating the rejection.

In addition, applicants would like to thank the examiner for his courtesy in holding a telephone conference on June 8, 2004 between the examiner and the applicants' representative. During the telephone conversation, the examiner and applicants' representative discussed dependent claims 12, 13, 25, and 26, which the examiner indicated in the Office Action would be allowable if written in independent form. In response, applicants have rewritten method claim 12 in independent form, and also incorporated the feature from dependent method claim 13. Similar amendments have also been made to system claim 25 and computer product claim 28.

As dependent claims 2-5 and 7-10 depend from independent claim 12, claims 15-18 and 20-23 depend from independent claim 25, and newly added dependent claims 29-36, depend from independent claim 28, applicants submit that dependent claims 2-5, 7-10, 15-18, 20-23, and 29-36 are allowable, at least by virtue of depending from allowable claims.

Accordingly, applicants understand all pending claims of the application to be in condition for allowance. Applicants respectfully request that the examiner withdraw all rejections to the present application and place the application in condition for allowance.

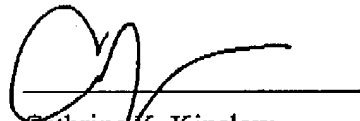
CONCLUSION

It is respectfully urged that the subject application is patentable over the cited references and is now in condition for allowance.

The examiner is invited to call the undersigned at the below-listed telephone number if in the opinion of the examiner such a telephone conference would expedite or aid the prosecution and examination of this application.

DATE: 6/14/04

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